



SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

MONTREAL 107, CANADA

STATEMENT BY THE ACTING PRINCIPAL OF SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

The hearing committee enquiring into the charge of racism levied against Assistant Professor Anderson by six Black students completed on Wednesday, February 5, its questioning of the witnesses who appeared before it. The committee was formed under my authority, and will in due course present its report and recommendations to the Vice-Principal, Academic, Dr. John O'Brien. As I have stated previously, an appeal can be lodged with me by either party against the jurisdiction of this committee, its recommendations or any action arising out of them that Vice-Principal O'Brien may take. I have undertaken that such an appeal will be referred to a tribunal of three eminent and qualified Canadians from outside the University, and that every effort will be made to ensure that the members of this tribunal are acceptable to both the parties involved.

Since Friday, February 7, the lawyers who represent the Black student complainants, Mr. Donald Oliver of Halifax and Mr. Michael Flavell of Montreal, have been meeting regularly with the legal representative of the University, Mr. David Schwartz, to discuss the possibility of an agreement on the future handling and the settlement of the case. Mr. Noel Lyon, the lawyer for Professor Anderson, has been advised of these discussions. They are continuing at present.

On December 5, 1968, Professor Anderson personally undertook not to return to his classes until the accusation against him had been dealt with. Last Friday, February 7, he did return to class. In view of the tensions this case has created within the University, and the possible effect of such an action on negotiations, as Acting Principal I have authorized the Vice-Principal, Academic, to suspend Professor Anderson temporarily from his duties. The University tenure policy states: "The Vice-Principal Academic, with the authorization of the Principal, may, in an emergency situation involving current harm to the University, suspend from his duties any member of the faculty whether under tenure or not, should the Principal consider such suspension to be in the best interests of the University." Such suspension is, of course, subject to review by an ad hoc committee of faculty.

I would like to emphasize that this act of suspension has no bearing on the charge made against Professor Anderson. It is solely an administrative act undertaken in the light of the present situation.

Throughout this very difficult period the administration of Sir George Williams University has endeavoured to keep the handling of the case against Professor Anderson within the University community. So far we have avoided calling in the police, and, though the Black student complainants and their supporters have occupied the Computer Centre and the Faculty Club, by and large peace and order have been maintained. In the present situation it is vital that there be no forceful disruption of peace and order; the University will not tolerate action by any group which leads to such disruption and, possibly, to violence.

Douglass Burns Clarke
Acting Principal